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February 13, 2008

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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT DISTRICT OF NEW JERSEY Civil Action No. 07-CV-6016

In Regard to the Matter of:

Bayside State Prison

Opinion and Report

Litigation

Of the

Special Master

MICHAEL HINDERSON

-vs-

WILLIAM H. FAUVER, ct al, Defendants.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2008

BEFORE THE HONORABLE JOHN W. BISSELL, SPECIAL MASTER

MASTROIANNI & FORMAROLI, INC.

Certified Court Reporting & Videoconferencing

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Audubon, New Jersey 08106

856-546-1100

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                     Transcript of proceedings in the above
     matter taken by Theresa O. Mastrojanni, Certified
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     Court Reporter, license number 30X100085700, and
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     Notary Public of the State of New Jersey at the
     United States District Court House, One Gerry Plaza,
 7
 8
     Camden, New Jersey, 08102, commencing at 9:30 AM.
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10
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Page 3 JUDGE BISSELL: I turn now to the 1 2 decision involving Michael Hinderson. 3 This opinion/report is being issued pursuant to the directives of the Order of Reference 4 5 to a Special Master and the Special Master's 6 Agreement, and the guiding principles of law which underlie this decision, to be applied to the facts 7 upon which it is based, are as set forth in the jury 8 9 instructions in the Walker and Mejias jury charges to 10 the extent applicable to the allegations in Mr. Hinderson's case. As finalized after review under 11 12 Local Civil Rule 52.1, this transcript constitutes the written report required under paragraph 7 of the 13 14 Order of Reference to a Special Master. We are opening up the record in the 15 case of Michael Hinderson, plaintiff, case number 16 17 07-6016. 18 Mr. Hinderson was housed in trailer 19 number three. He testified that on August 1st of '97 20 the SOG unit came to his trailer and as they approached him he heard them yell, quote, "There is 21 22 one on D-7 down," close quote, which he inferred (I 23 believe accurately) meant that he as a homosexual had been identified as being in that location and on that 24 25 bunk.

Page 4 He was stripped and directed to lie 1 naked face down on the floor. In the course of 2 3 having him in this position, one of the officers 4 began to use his night stick, baton, however one 5 wants to describe it, to massage and play around with 6 his buttocks. Although he was not penetrated, it was 7 perfectly clear to Mr. Hinderson, and frankly to 8 anyone analyzing the testimony, that this was an 9 effort at sexual teasing which was designed to embarrass Mr. Hinderson and did so. 10 11 When he flinched at this type of 12 activity which he did on more than one occasion, he 13 was hit with the night stick because he wasn't being perfectly still as directed. I find that some seven 14 15 hard painful hits in his ribs and lower back and neck were inflicted. These hits included not only being 16 17 struck with the baton, but also being kicked. Plaintiff testified that he still 18 19 suffers from chronic back and neck pain as a result 20 of these incidents. I'll have a little more to say 21 about that later because, based upon the nature of 22 his own description of these events and, frankly, the 23 exercise of some rather plain common sense which any 24 fact finder is asked to do, I do not find that he 25 would have chronic back and neck pain of this

Page 5 duration over the course of ten-and-a-half years. 1 2 However, as I said, I'll have more to say about that later. 3 He did, however, receive Motrin for his back and headaches after he went to the full minimum 5 farm at Bayside in or about December of '97. 6 He began to complain of this event only 7 when he got to the farm unit and then did not mention 8 9 that the source was a boating. He also did not make 10 any contemporaneous reports or subsequent reports of 11 this beating to either the ombudsman, internal 12 affairs or anyone else then and there. Once again, this is not without some 13 3.4 reason or level of understanding given the intimidating atmosphere that pervaded this location 15 and the fact that retribution could be expected. 16 We are not dealing with exhaustion of 17 administrative remedies claim in this particular 18 19 case, so I'm not saying that this observation will bind or preclude the raising of that defense in other 20 21 cases. But it certainly is, at least, an explanation as to why he did not do so and, therefore, the fact 22 of non-reporting does not adversely impact his 23 credibility with regard to the injuries suffered, at 24 25 least not in this case.

Page 6 1 To be frank, his testimony was not 2 Without some sources of impeachment. He's used in 3 the course of his life 15 different aliases 4 accompanied by Social Security numbers. I note the 5 reference to that event in the transcript of the 31st 6 of January, 2008 at page 69. He never sought 7 physical therapy anywhere at any time for these 8 injuries. Despite several opportunities up through 9 2001, he did not make reference to the fact that his 10 buttocks area had been involved in the assault. 11 Frankly, he's one who knows how to play the system 12 because he likes the lower bunk and has come to 13 realize that, if you complain of back pain and 14 perhaps support that with applications for 15 medication, you're likely to get the lower bunk. 16 On the other hand, at least by the time 17 he was in Southern State Prison in the year 2000 he 18 did recount to the nurse there the Bayside beating 19 and ascribed to it the injuries which he sustained 20 including the continuing pain. 21 I find also from the record that in or 22 about March of 2001 he fell out of a bunk at Southern 23 State and among other things received a collar for 24 his neck pain. Frankly, I determine that this is an 25 intervening cause, that more than likely is the

		Page 7
1	source of continuing or at least any aggravated pain	
2	in his back and neck thereafter.	
3	I find it reasonable under all the	
4	circumstances both in terms of time and events to	
5	ascribe to this defendant a measure of back and neck	
6	pain not as aggravated or exaggerated as he would	
7	have us believe, but nevertheless as the result of	
8	the beating inflicted upon him.	
9	I'm going to recommend a recovery for	
10	Mr. Hindorson based upon the entire record here	
11	including the references that I have made.	
12	Frankly, there is an inherent basis for	
13	the truth in this. He was ID'd from the outset of	
14	this incident as a homosexual. It was, of course, a	
15	homosexual that had killed Mr. Baker not two days	
16	before. It's entirely reasonable and T think an	
17	appropriate inference from the facts as a whole that	
18	particularly in the immediate wake of this homicide	
19	by a member of the homosexual community (if you want	
20	to call it that) at the Bayside Prison, a little	
21	extra treatment, a little extra retaliation, more	
22	than a little extra physical impact would be visited	
23	upon other known homosexuals in the Bayside Prison	
24	population.	
25	The actions directed against this	

Page 8 1 Plaintiff go well beyond the necessity of any proper 2 law enforcement needs or any proper exercise of 3 discipline or other legitimate penological purpose as 4 well defined in the jury instructions which I have 5 incorporated here. 6 There was, indeed, excessive and 7 unnecessary and, indeed, sadistic force imposed upon Mr. Hinderson here within the contemplation of those 8 9 legal principles. 10 However, particularly in light of the 11 fact that the striking of Mr. Hinderson was neither 12 terribly intense nor prolonged, I do not find that 13 the beating visited upon him rose to the level of 14 being so egregious as to support a claim for punitive 15 damages against at least the officers. 16 Now, I realize, of course, the officers 17 were unidentified here, but there will come a time 18 when the issue arises as to what is the significance 19 of conduct by the perpetrators in terms of any impact 20 that that might have upon efforts to establish 21 supervisor liability. 22 So here I want to make it perfectly 23 clear that I do make a finding that the conduct, 24 although actionable and one which would support an 25 award of compensatory damages, was not so egregious

		Page	9
1	as to support an award of punitive damages, under		
2	applicable legal standards.		
3	Finally, although not every item of		
4	evidence has been discussed in this opinion/report,		
5	all evidence presented to the Special Master was		
6	reviewed and considered.		
7	As I mentioned to you before, I find		
8	the allegations of injuries as described here was		
9	quite exaggerated both in duration and in its		
10	severity. I accordingly recommend in this report		
11	that the District Court enter an award of		
12	compensatory damages in the amount of three thousand		
13	dollars.		
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Page 10 1 CERTIFICATE 3 I, Theresa O. Mastroianni, a Notary Public and Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the testimony as 6 taken stemographically by and before me at the time, place, and on the date hereinbefore set forth. 8 9 I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither a 10 relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any 11 of the parties to this action, and that I am neither 12 a relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel, 13 and that I am not financially interested in the 3.4 action. 15 16 17 18 Theresa O. Mastrocanne 19 Theresa O. Mastroianni, C.S.R. 20 Notary Public, State of New Jersey My Commission Expires May 5, 2010 21 Centificate No. XI0857 Date: February 19, 2008 22 23 24 25

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